

20 December 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Morning Meeting of 20 December 1967

DD/I reported that preliminary assessment of the 15 and 16 December OXCART take indicates spectacular coverage, one indication being that 60 percent of North Vietnam was photographed. [REDACTED]

25X1

DD/I indicated that the Cambridge demonstration has been postponed until at least March or April. DD/S suggested and the Director concurred that, notwithstanding the reported postponement, a meeting should be held in early January to explore possible reactions to the demonstration.

Godfrey reported that the Soviet lead plane which has been positioned in Yemen as a communications center has now departed.

Kent drew attention to today's New York Times article on estimates of Communist forces in South Vietnam.

Carver reported that yesterday's briefing of Senator Bayh, though long and unstructured, was useful.

Carver drew attention to Saigon 15626 reporting Ambassador Komer's request for the station's comments on the financial and management transition of the RDC program.

Earman noted that Allen Dulles informed him he and William Buckley had taped a show for Channel 5 on "intelligence."

25X1

Bross reported that [REDACTED] indicated yesterday he has no recollection of the conference alleged by Philby in Izvestia to have taken place at CIA Headquarters. (See Action 1)

SECRET-YES C.A.I.

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DD/S&T reported that the U-2 did not fly last night because of weather conditions.



25X

ADD/P drew attention to another report from [redacted] [redacted] that two Chinese Communist infantry divisions have recently moved into North Vietnam.

25X

Goodwin drew attention to news stories about Douglas Marshall's "friendship mission" to ten Arab countries which connect Marshall with one of the foundations exposed in the early 1967 revelations.

ACTION:



25X

L. K. White

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SECRET-YES C.A.I.

U.S.-ARAB SOCIETY SETS MIDEAST TRIP

Trade Group Plans Visit to
Offset Soviet and China

Special to The New York Times

HOUSTON, Dec. 19—A Texas oil man, Douglas B. Marshall, will lead a "friendship mission" to 10 Arab countries in January, the American Arab Society announced today.

Apef Gamal El Din, secretary general of the society, said the organization "found that it is its duty to try as hard as it can to salvage the Arab world from the danger of Russian and Chinese domination and salvage our business and trade there from falling into the hands of others."

Marshall, executive vice president of the Quintana Petroleum Corporation of Houston, is the president of the society. Eighty companies are members, including petroleum and oil supply concerns, and other companies doing business with the Arab world.

Mr. Marshall, Mr. El Din, Dr. Edmond Saad, society vice president, and their wives will make the trip.

Mr. Marshall said they would leave Jan. 28 and meet with the heads of state of Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait, Iraq and the United Arab Republic. The mission will end March 4.

Mr. El Din said the tour had been approved by the State Department but was "wholly nonofficial and completely removed from politics."

Has Become a Citizen

Mr. El Din said he was a consul for the United Arab Republic three years ago, but is now a citizen of the United States.

Mr. Marshall said he did not believe that a report linking a foundation he had founded, with the Central Intelligence Agency would adversely affect his mission.

Last February, the Marshall Foundation of Houston was reported to be involved with the Intelligence agency in channeling Government funds to overseas projects.

The C.I.A. thing was rather tenuous," Mr. Marshall said. "The foundation primarily sponsors students for study in the United States. The C.I.A. connection was perhaps in choosing the students. I don't know if it was. I am not a trustee of the foundation."

"At the time of the report," Mr. Marshall said, "I did check to see if any C.I.A. money went into the foundation for use in the Middle East, and it did not."

Last June the Arab American Society announced that it was trying to raise \$200,000 for Arab refugees. Mr. Marshall and the Dallas oil man, H. A. Hunt, opened the drive with contributions of \$10,000 each. Mr. El Din said today only

U.S. ESTIMATE OF FOE'S STRENGTH

Aides Now Put the Enemy
Forces in South Vietnam
at 418,000 to 483,000

By HEDRICK SMITH

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 19 — Government officials say privately that they now estimate enemy military and political manpower in South Vietnam at 418,000 to 483,000, much higher than the figure of less than 300,000 reported in 1966.

"In terms of destroying the enemy's structure of power, we are farther away from our goal than we thought we were last year," one Government analyst said. "The more we find out, the worse it looks. It looks worse than a year ago."

During his recent visit to Washington, Gen. William C. Westmoreland, the American commander in Saigon, reported "remarkable progress." He presented charts showing a decline in enemy armed strength from 285,000 in late 1966 to 242,000.

The consensus in Washington is that there has been some decline in enemy strength over the last year, but that it is far more complex to figure out statistically than General West-

U.S. Officials Increase Estimate Of Enemy's Strength in Vietnam

Continued From Page 1, Col. 2 is estimated at 118,000, compared to 127,000 in September, 1966.

For one thing, officials say, that new intelligence shows that a year ago they were grossly underestimating enemy strength, especially the Vietcong political apparatus and low-level militia forces.

This helps explain the wide gap between the total of 285,000 in 1966 and more than 400,000 today. Essentially, Administration specialists now conclude that the enemy organization is—and has long been—numerically much more formidable than Washington previously reckoned.

In addition, officials explain that the Government changed its method of keeping score in Vietnam this fall and that the figures for 1967 cited by General Westmoreland are not strictly comparable to those used for 1966.

His 1967 figures include North Vietnamese and Vietcong regular units, guerrilla units below district level and the Vietcong logistics and administrative structure. The Pentagon estimates these categories at 223,000 to 249,000 in all. General Westmoreland used the figure 242,000.

2 Categories Excluded

His 1967 figures, however, excluded two categories that were included in 1966. These are the Vietcong political apparatus, now estimated at 75,000 to 85,000, and the local self-defense militia, now tentatively estimated at 120,000 to 150,000. If these two categories are included, to make the 1967 figures roughly comparable to those used in 1966, the total of enemy military and political strength is 418,000 to 483,000.

The picture is complicated by the fact that, despite the higher over-all numbers being used today, all key Government agencies accept the conclusion that enemy armed strength has declined somewhat since September, 1966.

Washington has arrived at this conclusion by using new intelligence to revise its 1966 estimates. The consensus is that the over-all strength figure probably exceeded half a million in late 1966.

But most specialists add that almost all figures are tentative and that future intelligence may bring further readjustments. With that proviso, officials present the following picture of enemy strength:

The figure for regular forces,

The political apparatus, including the hard-core Vietcong political leaders, hamlet organizers, tax collectors and propagandists throughout the country, was estimated in late 1966 at 39,000 to 40,000. The current estimate is 75,000 to 85,000. Officials say this reflects better intelligence, not an increase.

In 1966, the United States lumped together three groups of irregular forces, setting their total strength at 100,000 to 120,000. These were the Vietcong administrative and logistical structure; guerrilla forces organized in village platoons and squads, and self-defense militia—the part-time Vietcong, including women and youths, who are lightly armed and rarely venture outside their own hamlets. Some occasionally serve as runners and intelligence agents for main-force units.

These categories are now treated separately:

Administrative and logistics structure — This category, including noncombat soldiers and supply teams, medics and clerks, is estimated at 35,000 to 40,000. A year ago the figure was 25,000. Officials say the change represents better intelligence, not an increase.

Guerrillas — Pentagon estimates set their strength at 70,000 to 90,000. In 1966, the figure given was less precise, but generally lower than the current figure. On the basis of new intelligence, however, military officers believe that guerrilla strength totaled 150,000, and may have reached 180,000, in 1966. Civilian analysts suggest that peak guerrilla strength in 1966 ranged from 105,000 to 135,000.

Self-defense militia — A year ago the United States estimated this category at 50,000 to 70,000. Since then, American military forces have captured enemy documents placing this figure at a peak of 150,000 in 1966. This figure is still the official Government estimate, but many officials suggest that the actual figure is lower, perhaps 120,000.

The Administration has put a generally optimistic assessment on these new intelligence estimates. But some officials are wary of putting too much emphasis on statistics to prove that there has been a decline in enemy strength.

"On the basis of these statistics, it is hard to argue that we are really doing well," one official said. "We may be chipping away at the regular units and at the guerrilla strength. But the problem is that the more information we

North Vietnamese set the bigger they end up
Vietcong units, look 1966-1967